

Good Morning Representatives, My name is Karly Bouchard. I am a senior Interior Design student at Eastern Michigan University. Our program at EMU is accredited by the Council of Interior Design Accreditation, which insures that the Interior Design program is meeting the requirements which is necessary for us as students to succeed in a professional environment. I am honored to be here on behalf of my class, my school, and design students all over Michigan. I have only been apart of this process for the past four years but I know it has been a long journey and that this decision will help influence my future career and the careers of Students and Professionals all over Michigan. I am passionate about this bill because for the past four years I have worked very hard at learning things like ADA, fire and safety codes, and proper specifications for different environments and I feel like the state should recognize the fact that we are learning more than just how to select finishes.

As a student of an accredited program, we, as interior designers have an obligation to the health, safety and welfare of the general public and the consumer. This fact is instilled in us through many very important classes which prepare us for the National Council for Interior Designers Qualification Exam. Our program has several vital courses. In Human Factors we learn about ADA requirements and how to better the community by designing safe environments for all. We are also required to take a codes class which thoroughly discusses health and safety codes. We are educated in what materials are appropriate in terms of safety. We are also trained in lighting and structural elements, giving us a thorough knowledge on these elements. Although we are not experts when it comes to these areas we are able to understand and communicate extensively with experts.

I was born and raised in Michigan and my hope is that I will be able to stay here and practice my chosen profession, but without the necessary laws in place it is very difficult for me to find the benefit of staying here. This past summer I took an Internship in Atlanta Georgia because it was important to me to practice under a licensed professional and I have found that because it is not a requirement in Michigan many people are not taking the time to take the NCIDQ exam. I know that I was not the only student this past semester that left the state because of this issue. Many of these students were offered positions upon graduation, which they have accepted based on the fact that they do not feel they will get the proper recognition of there degree in the State of Michigan. Without a bill that protects us, Michigan will continue losing many qualified interior design professionals - those who are committed to excellent design and public safety.

I would like to thank all of you that have supported us along the way, and I hope that you will take my experience and the importance of this cause into consideration because the future careers of me and my peers as well as the careers of design professionals depend on it. Please accept my sincere gratitude for your time and consideration. Thank You